



Head Start

Leading the Field of Early Childhood Education

Resources, Results & Reasons To Be Proud

Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center



The **Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center (ECLKC)** is your one stop for everything Head Start. For more information on the projects summarized on this poster, visit the ECLKC at www.eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov and click on the Related Web Sites link on the left side of the page. Or, do an ECLKC Quick Search for the project name in English. The Office of Head Start (OHS) is working on making more of the materials available in Spanish.



Early and Family Literacy

As part of its continued focus on early and family literacy, Head Start worked with Sonoma State University to establish the National Head Start Family Literacy Center (NHSFLC). One of NHSFLC's projects is Strengthening Partnerships and Resources in Communities (SPARC), a series of training activities conducted over a 4-year period to establish a cadre of family literacy leaders and model programs. Another exciting Head Start literacy initiative is Steps to Success, a multimedia professional development program for training early literacy mentor-coaches. A Spanish version is now available for download on the ECLKC.



Early Math

Head Start is developing several tools to help programs improve teacher knowledge and children's math outcomes. One is a Math Scan that TA Providers, Education Managers, or Supervisors can use to look at math instruction and children's math experiences in classrooms. Another is the Head Start Math Toolkit that will contain the Math Scan, Leaders Guide, Creative Adventure DVD, and Where's the Math? presentation. Additionally, Head Start will conduct an interactive Webcast on early math teaching and learning, and release a report from the Head Start Math Work Group.



Early Head Start

Infants and toddlers have unique needs. An ongoing challenge is keeping up-to-date on the wealth of information that addresses those needs in children ages birth to 3. To meet that challenge, OHS created the Early Head Start National Resource Center (EHS NRC). The EHS NRC promotes new knowledge building and information sharing by linking resources; creating, collecting, and disseminating pertinent information; and providing opportunities for professional development. OHS has also developed Early Head Start Research to Practice Briefs based on recent research findings. Topics include supporting language and cognitive development in EHS, children with disabilities, and more.



Dual Language Learning

More than one-third of all Head Start children come from homes where a language other than English is spoken, and 84% of Head Start programs have multiple children who speak two or more languages. By supporting dual language learning from a very young age, Head Start has the potential to create an entire generation of bilingual children of all backgrounds. The Cultural Responsiveness and Dual Language Education (CRADLE) project assists EHS and Migrant and Seasonal Head Start programs in deepening their knowledge of dual language acquisition and cultural responsiveness as they work with parents and children.



Social and Emotional Development

Head Start's comprehensive child development model includes a focus on the social and emotional development of young children. In collaboration with the ACF Child Care Bureau, OHS funds the Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL) to promote the social and emotional outcomes and enhance the school readiness of preschool children. CSEFEL serves as a national resource center for disseminating research and evidence-based practices to Head Start and child care programs across the country. Recently CSEFEL expanded to include ages birth to 3.



Health and Nutrition

Head Start is partnering with the Environmental Protection Agency to address asthma, the most common chronic health condition in Head Start programs, and to reduce exposure to secondhand smoke. The Care for Their Air campaign will inform staff and parents about the dangers of environmental asthma triggers like secondhand smoke, which also increases the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), and can cause increased ear and respiratory infections. Head Start is addressing another major health concern—the need to improve children's nutrition and physical activity. I Am Moving, I Am Learning is an innovative program that promotes lifelong fitness for Head Start children. Since 2001, OHS has worked with the Health Resources and Services Administration to improve access to oral health services for pregnant women and children through the National Head Start Oral Health Resource Center.



Services for Children with Disabilities

Head Start's comprehensive model often provides the first opportunity to identify a disability or health condition affecting a young child's development. In fact, in 2006, about 55% of Head Start children with disabilities had their disabilities identified after enrollment. OHS offers a number of resources to support these children's successful participation. The Hilton/EHS Training Program supports EHS and Migrant and Seasonal Head Start programs in serving infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families. OHS works with the National Center for Hearing Assessment and Management to implement Hearing Head Start, a project designed to help programs improve hearing screening practices.



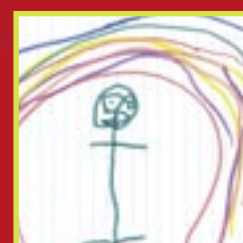
Professional Development

Head Start has long been committed to increasing professional development opportunities for teaching staff. Since 1991, Head Start has awarded grants to improve teachers' access to degree opportunities through the Higher Education Grantees (HEG) program. Other professional development initiatives include a cooperative agreement with the Council for Professional Recognition, the organization that administers the Childhood Development Association National Credentialing Program, and an online Distance Learning Opportunities Catalog. The catalog lists higher education institutions that offer complete programs of distance learning courses in early childhood education and child development.



Research to Policy to Practice (and Back Again)

From its earliest years, Head Start has supported research to inform quality improvement. Partnering with the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE), OHS recently renewed its commitment to making research easier to access, understand, and use, in order to inform practice. One example is Friendly FACES, a practitioner-friendly summary of findings from the Family and Child Experiences Survey (FACES). Another example is the Head Start Research to Practice project, which will identify effective evidence-based practices and offer practitioner-oriented briefs summarizing the findings. OHS is also developing Head Start Research to Practice Tip Sheets summarizing findings from ACF-funded Head Start research by topic area and offering guidance on what the findings mean for program standards.



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